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HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

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U S DEPT OF AGRICULTURE

A radio talk by Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate NEC stations, Wednesday, February 24, 1937.

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MR. SALISBURY: Now turning to the home economics part of our program, again your friend, Ruth Van Deman, is here ready with one of her timely reports. Ruth, do you want to pick it right up there?

MISS VAN DEMAN: All right, Morse, by the way we missed you last week when Doctor Nelson and I were talking about cod-liver oil and vitamin units.

MR. SALISBURY: Next time, if you don't mind, make it just vitamin units. As I've said before, I did my duty by the cod-liver oil bottle when I was a kid and now -

MISS VAN DEMAN: And now that you're free, white, and 21, you vow you'll get your vitamin units from some other source.

MR. SALISBURY: Yes, ma'am. Absolutely.

MISS VAN DEMAN: That's perfectly all right. Lots of nutrition experts would agree with you on that. And it's right in line with the new poultry science.

MR. SALISBURY: Poultry science! You're not implying that I eat with the chickens are you, Ruth?

MISS VAN DEMAN: Not quite. Let me finish. More and more poultrymen are feeding their hens a ration with cod-liver oil in it, and the two vitamins, A and D, in the oil are carried over into the eggs- the yolks particularly.

MR. SALISBURY: That's fine. I'm perfectly willing to let the hens eat the cod-liver oil for me and let me get the benefit of it later in a nice brown omelet, or a lemon pie with a meringue two feet high.

MISS VAN DEMAN: A meringue two feet high! That is a rather tall meringue, Morse, almost tall enough to be on one of Paul Bunyan's pies.

Well, I can't think of another egg story to top that, but changing the subject to grapefruit, I've got some figures that sound almost as fantastic.

As you've probably heard before, the grapefruit crop this year is a record breaker. Back in October it was estimated that two billion grapefruit would roll to market this winter, in one kind of a package or another. Most grapefruit of course are wrapped in tissue paper and packed in boxes, say 54 to 70 fruit to the box. But some are piled loose into trucks, and some are canned as grapefruit sections or juice ready for the breakfast table.

(over)

I'm not prepared to say how many glasses of grapefruit juice we drink in this country a year. But I do know that the demand has doubled and trebled the last few years until its up in the millions of cases of the product in tin cans.

Europeans laugh at us and say we're streamlining even our breakfast fruit. They say that in our craze for speed we won't even take time to spoon the juicy pulp out of a grapefruit all fixed for us on the half shell.

And I have to admit there's truth in what they say. But along with a great many others I'm finding it an easy way to get my fruit in a hurry, and maybe get even more of the food values I need than if I stopped to eat pulp and all.

I've also heard a good many people from other countries wax eloquent, not to say envious, about our big smooth, thin-skinned, tender-fleshed, almost sweet grapefruit. They're a strictly modern American product, of course, - a development of the last 30 or so years from those early coarse-skinned fruit that were just about as bitter as quinine.

I don't know whether I dare say anything about the pink-fleshed grapefruit. One time I said something very complimentary about the pink grapefruit from Texas in one of our Farm and Home Hour broadcasts, and a few days later I had a letter from Florida calling me down good and proper. I was told that the pink grapefruit originated as a bud sport in Manatee County, Florida. Well, maybe there were pink-fleshed bud sports in Texas too, and in California and Arizona for all I know. I haven't had a chance to delve into the history of the grapefruit family, and follow it down through root and branch. But I have this winter eaten delicious pink grapefruit from Florida. So I know they do grow there as well as in Texas.

And just to answer a question that is probably in somebody's mind right now. Very often we are asked whether, since grapefruit is so abundant this year, it wouldn't be a good plan to can some at home. I've taken that question down to Mabel Stienbarger time and time again. She always shakes her head, unless the question comes from somebody in the grapefruit belt - somebody who has a grapefruit tree in the back yard and can do the canning as soon as the fruit is picked. Even so grapefruit is very difficult to can by home methods. So far it's the only citrus fruit that even the commercial canner has been able to handle with marked success. And the canned grapefruit and juice are among the few citrus products that hold a large amount of their vitamin C despite the heat of canning.

As I've mentioned before, vitamin C seems to be the most easily lost of all the vitamins. Heat and air, especially the two together, are very damaging to it. So if you want to keep all the vitamin C possible in grapefruit, fresh or canned, don't let it stand around in the air after it's fixed ready for the table.

Well, time's up for today, but I'll be back again next week, schedules permitting.

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